

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Levitt 202/343-5634

ENDANGERED STATUS AND CRITICAL HABITAT PROPOSED FOR THE ILLINOIS MUD TURTLE

Listing the Illinois mud turtle (Kinosternon flavescens sponneri) as an endangered species and identifying its critical habitat was proposed by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the July 7, 1978, Federal Register.

Threats to the turtle's survival include intense habitat alteration and collecting by amateur turtle enthusiasts. There are at least three populations of the species in Illinois and Iowa.

Endangered means that a species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Listing the turtle as endangered and identifying its critical habitat would give it the protection of the Endangered Species Act of 1973. The Act prohibits any Federal agency from authorizing, funding, or taking any action that would threaten the continued existence or adversely affect the critical habitat of a listed species. Critical habitat designation, however, does not affect actions by private landowners, States, or local governments.

Comments from the public are invited through September 5, 1978. Submit comments to the Director (OES), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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